

Name: _____



New York State Testing Program

2022

**English Language Arts Test
Session 1**

Grade 8

March 29–31, 2022

RELEASED QUESTIONS

Session 1



TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read all the directions carefully.
- Most questions will make sense only when you **read the whole passage**. You may read the passage more than once to answer a question. When a question includes a quotation from a passage, be sure to keep in mind what you learned from reading the whole passage. You may need to review **both** the quotation and the passage in order to answer the question correctly.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before making your choice.

Directions

Read this passage. Then answer questions 8 through 14.

Excerpt from “The Beadwork” from *American Indian Stories*

by Zitkala-Sa

- 1 Soon after breakfast mother sometimes began her beadwork. On a bright, clear day, she pulled out the wooden pegs that pinned the skirt of our wigwam to the ground, and rolled the canvas part way up on its frame of slender poles. Then the cool morning breezes swept freely through our dwelling, now and then wafting the perfume of sweet grasses from the newly burnt prairie.
- 2 Untying the long tasseled strings that bound a small brown buckskin bag, my mother spread upon a mat beside her bunches of colored beads, just as an artist arranges the paints upon his palette. On a lapboard she smoothed out a double sheet of soft white buckskin; and drawing from a beaded case that hung on the left of her wide belt a long, narrow blade, she trimmed the buckskin into shape. Often she worked upon small moccasins for her small daughter. Then I became intensely interested in her designing. With a proud, beaming face, I watched her work. In imagination, I saw myself walking in a new pair of snugly fitting moccasins. I felt the envious eyes of my playmates upon the pretty red beads decorating my feet.
- 3 Close beside my mother I sat on a rug, with a scrap of buckskin in one hand and an awl in the other. This was the beginning of my practical observation lessons in the art of beadwork. From a skein of finely twisted threads of silvery sinews my mother pulled out a single one. With an awl she pierced the buckskin, and skillfully threaded it with the white sinew. Picking up the tiny beads one by one, she strung them with the point of her thread, always twisting it carefully after every stitch. . . .
- 4 Always after these confining lessons I was wild with surplus spirits, and found joyous relief in running loose in the open again. Many a summer afternoon a party of four or five of my playmates roamed over the hills with me. We each carried a light, sharpened rod about four feet long, with which we pried up certain sweet roots. When we had eaten all the choice roots we chanced upon, we shouldered our rods and strayed off into patches of a stalky plant under whose yellow blossoms we found little crystal

GO ON

drops of gum. Drop by drop we gathered this nature's rock-candy, until each of us could boast of a lump the size of a small bird's egg. Soon satiated¹ with its woody flavor, we tossed away our gum, to return again to the sweet roots.

- 5 I remember well how we used to exchange our necklaces, beaded belts, and sometimes even our moccasins. We pretended to offer them as gifts to one another. We delighted in impersonating our own mothers. We talked of things we had heard them say in their conversations. We imitated their various manners, even to the inflection of their voices. In the lap of the prairie we seated ourselves upon our feet, and leaning our painted cheeks in the palms of our hands, we rested our elbows on our knees, and bent forward as old women were most accustomed to do.
- 6 While one was telling of some heroic deed recently done by a near relative, the rest of us listened attentively, and exclaimed in undertones "Han! han!" (yes! yes!) whenever the speaker paused for breath, or sometimes for our sympathy. As the discourse became more thrilling, according to our ideas, we raised our voices in these interjections. In these impersonations our parents were led to say only those things that were in common favor.
- 7 No matter how exciting a tale we might be rehearsing, the mere shifting of a cloud shadow in the landscape near by was sufficient to change our impulses; and soon we were all chasing the great shadows that played among the hills. We shouted and whooped in the chase; laughing and calling to one another, we were like little sportive nymphs² on that Dakota sea of rolling green.
- 8 On one occasion I forgot the cloud shadow in a strange notion to catch up with my own shadow. Standing straight and still, I began to glide after it, putting out one foot cautiously. When, with the greatest care, I set my foot in advance of myself, my shadow crept onward too. Then again I tried it; this time with the other foot. Still again my shadow escaped me. I began to run; and away flew my shadow, always just a step beyond me. Faster and faster I ran, setting my teeth and clenching my fists, determined to overtake my own fleet shadow. But ever swifter it glided before me while I was growing breathless and hot. Slackening my speed, I was greatly vexed that my shadow should check its pace also. Daring it to the utmost, as I thought, I sat down upon a rock imbedded in the hillside.
- 9 So! my shadow had the impudence³ to sit down beside me!
- 10 Now my comrades caught up with me, and began to ask why I was running away so fast.

- 11 “Oh, I was chasing my shadow! Didn’t you ever do that?” I inquired, surprised that they should not understand.
- 12 They planted their moccasined feet firmly upon my shadow to stay it, and I arose. Again my shadow slipped away, and moved as often as I did. Then we gave up trying to catch my shadow.
- 13 Before this peculiar experience, I have no distinct memory of having recognized any vital bond between myself and my shadow. I never gave it an afterthought.
- 14 Returning to our borrowed belts and trinkets, we rambled homeward. That evening, as on other evenings, I went to sleep over my legends.

¹**satiated:** completely satisfied

²**sportive nymphs:** playful creatures of the woods

³**impudence:** nerve

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8

Which detail **best** reflects the narrator's point of view of her mother and her beadwork?

- A comparing the mother to an artist arranging paints upon a palette
- B describing the mother drawing a blade to trim the buckskin
- C mentioning the mother making moccasins for her daughter
- D describing the mother picking up the tiny beads one at a time

9

What similarity is shared between the events in paragraph 3 and the events in paragraph 4?

- A Both paragraphs emphasize the value of honoring family traditions.
- B Both paragraphs describe the ability to use tools with precision.
- C Both paragraphs demonstrate how teachers inspire others.
- D Both paragraphs highlight the joys of friendship and play.

10

The central idea of paragraph 4 is

- A children enjoy eating sweet things
- B the narrator is a leader among her friends
- C children are able to make their own fun
- D the setting has many natural resources

11 What does the narrator's frequent use of the word "we" in paragraphs 4 and 5 suggest?

- A** youthfulness
- B** dependence
- C** companionship
- D** remembrance

12 What is the meaning of "discourse" as used in paragraph 6?

- A** brief remark
- B** spoken story
- C** response to someone
- D** disagreement between people

13 How do paragraphs 8 and 9 contrast with the paragraphs right before and after them?

- A** They provide a look at the narrator's imagination.
- B** They demonstrate the narrator's desire for independence.
- C** They emphasize the narrator's physical abilities.
- D** They focus attention on the narrator's selfish nature.

GO ON

14

Which sentence **best** expresses a central idea of the passage?

- A The narrator is interested in her mother's beadwork on small moccasins.
- B After beadwork lessons with her mother, the narrator loves to play outdoors.
- C The narrator's friends try to help her catch her shadow while playing.
- D When running through the fields, the narrator and her friends make lots of noise.

GO ON

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 22 through 28.

This story takes place in Japan. The narrator has just rented a new home on a small street named Lightning Alley.

Excerpt from *The Guest Cat*

by Takashi Hiraide

- 1 The cat's name was Chibi, which means "little one." We could hear the boy's particularly high-pitched voice calling the cat: "Chibi!" Then we'd hear the sound of the boy's shoes running around outside, followed by the tinkling of the little bell announcing the cat's arrival.
- 2 Chibi was a jewel of a cat. Her pure white fur was mottled with several lampblack blotches containing just a bit of light brown. The sort of cat you might see just about anywhere in Japan, except she was especially slim and tiny.
- 3 These were her individual characteristics—slim and small, with ears that stood out, tapering off beautifully at the tips, and often twitching. She would approach silently and undetected to rub up against one's legs. At first I thought Chibi avoided me because I was not used to cats, but this seems not to have been the case. When a girl who often passed along Lightning Alley stopped and crouched to gaze at the cat, it did not run away. But as soon as she attempted to touch it, the cat quickly slipped off, avoiding contact at all costs. The cat's manner of rejection was like cold, white light.
- 4 Moreover, the cat rarely made a sound. As far as I remember, when it first appeared in the alley it made some sort of sound, but since then it had never let out a meow. It looked as if no matter how much time passed the cat was not going to let us hear its voice. This seemed to be the message the cat was giving us.
- 5 Another one of Chibi's characteristics was that she changed the direction of her cautious attention frequently. This active behavior wasn't limited to her kittenhood. Perhaps because she played alone most of the time in the expansive garden, she reacted strongly to insects and reptiles. And there were times when I could only conclude that she must be reacting to subtle changes in the wind and light, not detectable by humans. It may be that most cats share the same quickness, but even so, in Chibi's case, it was acute—she was, after all, the cat of Lightning Alley. My wife got into the habit of pointing to the cat whenever it went by, extolling¹ its virtues. . . .

GO ON

- 6 Chibi, who loved to play ball, gradually began to visit us on her own and would try and get us to play with her. She would step gingerly into the room and gaze intently at its occupants, then purposefully turn around and walk back out, as if to lead us to the garden. This process would be repeated until she got a response. Most of the time my wife would put down whatever she was doing, slip happily into her sandals and head outside.
- 7 Having played to her heart's content, Chibi would come inside and rest for a while. When she began to sleep on the sofa—like a talisman² curled gently in the shape of a comma and dug up from a prehistoric archaeological site—a deep sense of happiness arrived, as if the house itself had dreamed this scene.
- 8 Avoiding the prying eyes of the landlady, we began leaving it up to Chibi to come inside the house whenever she wanted—and with this new development I had begun little by little to understand cat lovers. Whether on TV or in all of the ubiquitous³ cat calendars, it seemed as if there was no cat comparable to her. But, though I had started to think of her as the best cat around, she was not really our cat.
- 9 First we would hear the tinkling of the bell, and then she would appear, so we began to call her by the nickname “Tinkerbelle.” Whenever we wanted her to come over, this name seemed to find itself on our lips.
- 10 “I wonder where Tinkerbelle is.” By the time my wife had gotten the words out of her mouth we’d hear the tinkling of Chibi’s bell. We’d realize that she was near at the point where, exiting the foyer next door (located at the second corner of Lightning Alley), Chibi would leap through the tear in the wire-mesh boundary of the property, dash along the side of the building, turn at the far end of the veranda, leap up onto the open area of the deck, and then, placing her front paws on the window frame at about the height of a human adult’s knee, stretch out her neck to peek inside.
- 11 In winter she came inside. Little by little, through the crack in the partially opened window, her tendency to visit subtly developed; her appearances were repeated until, as if a silken opening in a fabric had been continuously moistened and stretched, Chibi had entered our lives. But at the same time—call it fate if you will—something else was closing in and pressing itself against that tendency.

¹**extolling:** praising

²**talisman:** an object thought to bring good luck

³**ubiquitous:** present everywhere

22

What does the phrase “cold, white light” in paragraph 3 suggest about Chibi?

- A** She prefers to be outdoors during the day.
- B** She demands fast responses from humans.
- C** She struggles to survive outside in the winter.
- D** She is indifferent to the feelings of humans.

23

What is the meaning of the word “subtle” as it is used in paragraph 5?

- A** environmental
- B** slight
- C** powerful
- D** rapid

24

How does the narrator’s point of view shift in paragraphs 7 and 8?

- A** He grows concerned the landlady will discover the cat.
- B** He starts to think about keeping the cat.
- C** He becomes worried for the safety of the cat.
- D** He begins to feel affection toward the cat.

GO ON

25

In paragraph 8, why does the narrator say he “had begun little by little to understand cat lovers”?

- A He realizes that most cats are probably like Chibi.
- B He decides to buy a cat calendar to celebrate Chibi.
- C He feels a sense of contentment when Chibi visits.
- D He is in awe of the boy who runs around outside with Chibi.

26

Which activity first leads Chibi to engage with the narrator and his wife?

- A sleeping on the sofa
- B staying away from the landlady
- C wanting to play ball
- D being called by a nickname

27

Which quotation **best** expresses a central idea of the story?

- A “The cat’s name was Chibi, which means ‘little one.’ ” (paragraph 1)
- B “The cat’s manner of rejection was like cold, white light.” (paragraph 3)
- C “Having played to her heart’s content, Chibi would come inside and rest for a while.” (paragraph 7)
- D “But, though I had started to think of her as the best cat around, she was not really our cat.” (paragraph 8)

Which statement would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?

- A** Chibi looks especially slim and tiny for a cat.
- B** Chibi grows comfortable with the narrator and his wife.
- C** Chibi avoids being touched by humans.
- D** Chibi rarely makes a sound except for the tinkling of her bell.

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 29 through 35.

Excerpt from *The Call of Coney Island*

by Cynthia Overbeck Bix

- 1 Salty ocean smells mingle with the aromas of sweet cotton candy and Nathan's Famous hot dogs. The legendary Cyclone roller coaster lurches along its tracks—then takes a heart-stopping plunge. Riders whoop and scream with excitement. Farther down the boardwalk, the sound of a carousel starts. Patrons pitch balls at moving targets, hoping to win a prize. Welcome to Coney Island, the nation's first truly modern amusement area.
- 2 Located on the southern tip of Brooklyn, New York, Coney Island has been the place to go for fun for more than a century. The inspiration for amusement parks such as Coney Island sprang from an exciting event in 1893—the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It was one of the first venues where people experienced a variety of attractions in one large space.
- 3 Visitors to Chicago gasped in wonder when they saw the fair's "White City" spread out before them. Beautiful all-white exhibition buildings and large classical statues framed a lagoon of shimmering water. Designed to educate and inform, about a dozen grand buildings housed displays on the latest developments in transportation, machinery, agriculture, art, horticulture, and more. Most visitors had never seen the things they saw there, such as electric lights, a moving sidewalk, world-famous artwork, and moving pictures.
- 4 While the World's Columbian Exposition awed people with new innovations and ideas, its most popular attraction was the Midway Plaisance. Located in a separate section of the exhibition grounds, the Midway was filled with entertainment: rides, food stands, and sideshows. People could get a taste of international cultures, for example, by riding a camel through the Streets of Cairo or strolling among the thatched huts of a South Sea village. Best of all, they could ride George Ferris's giant spinning wheel. Rising 264 feet above the Midway, this engineering marvel became the star of the fair. It was a spectacular example of what the new age of machines made possible.

- 5 One visitor, New York showman George C. Tilyou, immediately saw potential for this new form of entertainment. Tilyou owned property on Coney Island, which already was an established beach resort with hotels, bathhouses, and restaurants. It also featured an odd collection of sideshows, food vendors, fortunetellers, and more. Tilyou decided to build an enclosed amusement park there.
- 6 In 1897, Tilyou opened Steeplechase Park. When he was unable to buy Ferris’s wheel, he had his own version built. For 25 cents, visitors could ride Tilyou’s wheel, enjoy the Scenic Railway, or climb into a “spaceship” for a Trip to the Moon. On the Steeplechase, wooden horses carried riders along a metal racetrack from a starting gate to a finish line.
- 7 Steeplechase Park’s huge success was partly due to another invention—electric railways. The first electric trolley line had connected Manhattan Island and Coney Island in the mid-1800s. By the turn of the 20th century, an electric train offered an even faster way to carry more people wanting to escape from the hot, crowded city.
- 8 In the late 1800s and early 1900s, most people worked long hours and six days a week in urban factories and shops. But for a nickel fare, a city worker could afford a day’s outing to a nearby park on Sundays. Recognizing the value of giving the working class access to day trips, trolley and train companies established parks that were located at the end of a line. Travelers disembarked to enjoy simple outdoor pleasures in picnic groves and swimming pools or beaches. Eventually, merry-go-rounds, penny arcades,¹ and even small roller coasters were added. . . .
- 9 Part sideshow, part circus, part theme park, Coney Island set an example for amusement parks. Attractions that are so familiar today—roller coasters, water rides, fun houses, Tunnels of Love—all got their start there.
- 10 Many amusement parks closed during the Great Depression in the 1930s or during World War II (1939–1945). Coney Island has had its ups and downs, too. Over the decades, fires and age destroyed some of the original attractions. In 2012, Superstorm Sandy wrecked the boardwalk and many of the attractions.

- 11 In spite of all that, Coney Island has survived, and it is still operating today. It continues to offer each new generation of kids (and their parents) a chance to escape to a special world of entertainment and thrills. And from New Jersey's Wildwood Park to California's Pacific Park and Florida's Walt Disney World, other amusement and theme parks have taken their cues from Coney Island. They have grown to epic proportions in their efforts to offer a world full of fun.

¹**penny arcades:** indoor area with amusements such as games and photo booths operated by placing a coin in a slot

29

In paragraph 1, what does the phrase “lurches along its tracks—then takes a heart-stopping plunge” suggest about the Cyclone roller coaster?

- A** It moves at an unexpected rate of speed.
- B** It provides a thrilling experience for riders.
- C** It appeals to some visitors but not others.
- D** It presents a safety hazard for riders.

30

Why was George Ferris’s wheel considered an “engineering marvel” (paragraph 4)?

- A** It became the most popular attraction at the exposition.
- B** It was the fastest ride in the Midway section of the exposition.
- C** It gave people the opportunity to see the capabilities of new technology.
- D** It was something that other amusement park owners tried to bring to their parks.

31

How did Tilyou’s visit to the World’s Columbian Exposition affect the property at Coney Island?

- A** Tilyou was motivated to build a park with amusement rides.
- B** Tilyou brought George Ferris’s giant wheel to Coney Island.
- C** Tilyou created multiple attractions based on different themes.
- D** Tilyou decided to construct an electric railway to Coney Island.

GO ON

32 The use of quotation marks around the word “spaceship” in paragraph 6 suggests that

- A** the spaceship is a form of transportation for the ride
- B** the vehicle that the visitors ride looks like a spaceship
- C** the park has an old spaceship converted into a ride
- D** the spaceship resembles a similar attraction at another park

33 Based on paragraphs 10 and 11, what is the author’s point of view?

- A** Newer amusement parks offer families more fun than Coney Island.
- B** Coney Island should be modernized in order to keep attracting visitors.
- C** It has cost too much money to restore Coney Island after recent difficulties.
- D** Coney Island remains an exciting destination for visitors after many years.

Read this sentence from paragraph 11.

And from New Jersey’s Wildwood Park to California’s Pacific Park and Florida’s Walt Disney World, other amusement and theme parks have taken their cues from Coney Island.

Which quotation **best** supports this claim?

- A “The inspiration for amusement parks such as Coney Island sprang from an exciting event in 1893—the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago.” (paragraph 2)
- B “When he was unable to buy Ferris’s wheel, he had his own version built.” (paragraph 6)
- C “Attractions that are so familiar today—roller coasters, water rides, fun houses, Tunnels of Love—all got their start there.” (paragraph 9)
- D “They have grown to epic proportions in their efforts to offer a world full of fun.” (paragraph 11)

Which statement expresses a central idea developed **throughout** the article?

- A The Coney Island amusement park was initially separated by different types of entertainment.
- B The World’s Columbian Exposition had many elements that were later used in the Coney Island amusement park.
- C The Coney Island amusement park was influenced by previous attractions and eventually impacted the modern amusement park.
- D The invention of the electric railway was important to the popularity of the Coney Island amusement park.

STOP

Name: _____



New York State Testing Program

2022

**English Language Arts Test
Session 2**

Grade 8

March 29–31, 2022

RELEASED QUESTIONS

Session 2



TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

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- Be sure to read all the directions carefully.
- Most questions will make sense only when you **read the whole passage**. You may read the passage more than once to answer a question. When a question includes a quotation from a passage, be sure to keep in mind what you learned from reading the whole passage. You may need to review **both** the quotation and the passage in order to answer the question correctly.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before writing your response.
- In writing your responses, be sure to
 - clearly organize your writing and express what you have learned;
 - accurately and completely answer the questions being asked;
 - support your responses with examples or details from the text; and
 - write in complete sentences using correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.
- For the last question in this test book, you may plan your writing on the Planning Page provided, but do NOT write your final answer on this Planning Page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on the lined response pages provided.

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 36 through 38.

Elaine Reese is a professor of psychology and the author of a book about telling stories.

Excerpt from *What Kids Learn From Hearing Family Stories*

by Elaine Reese

- 1 “Dad, tell me a story from when you were little. Tell me the story about the time you met your best friend Chris at school.” Six-year-old Alex, who has just started school himself, snuggles into his pillow and catches his dad’s hand in the dark. They have finished the nightly reading of *Tin Tin* and now it’s time for “just one more story” before Alex goes to sleep.
- 2 Most parents know about the benefits of reading stories from books with their young children. Parents are blasted with this message in pediatricians’ offices, at preschool, on TV, even with billboards on the city bus. Reading books with children on a daily basis advances their language skills, extends their learning about the world, and helps their own reading later in school. Reading with your child from a young age can instill a lifelong love of books. A new study published in *Science* even shows that reading literary fiction improves adults’ ability to understand other people’s emotions.
- 3 Reading books with your children is clearly a good idea. . . .
- 4 Yet what most parents don’t know is that everyday family stories, like the one that Alex’s dad spun out that night, confer many of the same benefits of reading—and even some new ones.
- 5 Over the last 25 years, a small canon¹ of research on family storytelling shows that when parents share more family stories with their children—especially when they tell those stories in a detailed and responsive way—their children benefit in a host of ways. For instance, experimental studies show that when parents learn to reminisce² about everyday events with their preschool children in more detailed ways, their children tell richer, more complete narratives to other adults one to two years later compared to children whose parents didn’t learn the new reminiscing techniques. Children of the parents who learned new ways to reminisce also demonstrate better understanding of other people’s thoughts and emotions. These advanced narrative and emotional skills

GO ON

serve children well in the school years when reading complex material and learning to get along with others. In the preteen years, children whose families collaboratively discuss everyday events and family history more often have higher self-esteem and stronger self-concepts. And adolescents with a stronger knowledge of family history have more robust identities, better coping skills, and lower rates of depression and anxiety. Family storytelling can help a child grow into a teen who feels connected to the important people in her life.

- 6 Best of all, unlike stories from books, family stories are always free and completely portable. You don't even need to have the lights on to share with your child a story about your day, about their day, about your childhood or their grandma's. In the research on family storytelling, all of these kinds of stories are linked to benefits for your child. Family stories can continue to be part of a parent's daily interactions with their children into adolescence, long past the age of the bedtime story.
- 7 All families have stories to tell, regardless of their culture or their circumstances. Of course, not all of these stories are idyllic³ ones. Research shows that children and adolescents can learn a great deal from stories of life's more difficult moments—as long as those stories are told in a way that is sensitive to the child's level of understanding, and as long as something good is gleaned from the experience. . . .
- 8 Books contain narratives, but only family stories contain your family's *personal* narratives. Fortunate children get both. They hear and read stories from books to become part of other people's worlds, and they hear and tell stories of their family to understand who they are and from whence they came. . . .
- 9 The holidays are prime time for family storytelling. When you're . . . having your holiday meal, share a story with your children about past holidays. Leave in the funny bits, the sad bits, the gory and smelly bits—kids can tell when a story has been sanitized for their protection. Then invite everyone else to tell a story too. Don't forget the youngest and the oldest storytellers in the group. Their stories may not be as coherent,⁴ but they can be the truest, and the most revealing.

- 10 Family stories can be told nearly anywhere. They cost us only our time, our memories, our creativity. They can inspire us, protect us, and bind us to others. So be generous with your stories, and be generous *in* your stories. Remember that your children may have them for a lifetime.
-

¹**canon:** collection

²**reminisce:** remember past events in an enjoyable or emotionally warm way

³**idyllic:** ideal or perfectly positive

⁴**coherent:** clear

GO ON

36

In “Excerpt from *What Kids Learn From Hearing Family Stories*,” how does the author develop a connection between stories from books and family stories? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

37

How does paragraph 5 support a central claim in “Excerpt from *What Kids Learn From Hearing Family Stories*”? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

38

What does the author mean in paragraph 10 when she recommends to the reader to “be generous *in* your stories”? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 39 and 40.

Dad is in the U.S. Army. Each Saturday he leads his two children, Esme and Ike, on a mission to make the best pancakes in the world.

Excerpt from *100 Days and 99 Nights*

by Alan Madison

- 1 I am best at beating the batter, Ike is best at greasing the griddle, and Dad is, of course, far and away the finest flipper between here and just about anywhere. While we are working, Mom sits sipping coffee and reading the *Drum & Bugle*. She makes sure there are no mistakes in either the newspaper or the manner in which we prepare pancakes. Dad says she is a “super supervisor.”
- 2 To make sure our pancakes come out consistently top-dog tasty, it is extremely important to do everything precisely the same way it was done the Saturday before, the Saturday before that, and before that. To do that, we follow Dad’s pancake rules. . . .
- 3 Saturday mornings, when the cuckoo clock begins the first of eight cuckoos, Ike and I slip downstairs, drop our aprons over our heads, and tie the string over our bellies, each with the exact same double-looped bow. We try to finish before the mechanical bird sticks its tiny red-tufted head out to deliver the final high-pitched cuckoo.
- 4 While we wash our hands in the kitchen sink, Dad, in his green-and-yellow-squared flannel robe, rubbing the top of his buzz-cut head, pounds down the stairs. Blinking the sleep from his eyes, he inspects our cooking uniforms. When satisfied, he yawns, “Okay, troops, we are ready to cook.”
- 5 We salute, bringing our open right hands sharply to our foreheads and then karate chopping them down. This is military speak for “ready, willing, and able.” Dad says we should always end it with “sir, yes, sir,” to show the proper respect for a commanding officer.
- 6 “Sir, yes, sir!” Ike and I cry in unison.
- 7 “One cup flour,” he commands.
- 8 “Flour is made from flowers,” Ike states as usual.
- 9 Dad smiles and I roll my eyes around my head because *every* week Ike always swears that flour (F-L-O-U-R) is made from flowers (F-L-O-W-E-R-S) and that is why they are

GO ON

spelled differently. This makes zero sense, which is exactly Ike Sense, because then they should be spelled exactly the same! . . .

- 10 Under Dad’s watchful eye, we exact-measure and combine the salt and baking soda into the bowl. Then, trying not to make too much of a mess, we carefully measure out the wet ingredients: water, oil, and the top secretest ingredient — “Yogurt!” Ike yells. “Yogurt, yoooguurt!” he screams. Ike feels that *yogurt* is the absolute funniest word he has ever heard and as soon as dad starts spooning out the glistening white goo, he starts giggling and rolling the word out of his mouth, either drawing out the soft-sounding “yo” or cutting off the hard-syllabled “gurt” and sometimes even attempting to do both. “Yoooogrt!” Mom chuckles from behind the spread-open *Drum & Bugle* as Ike goes through his word acrobatics while I remain silent because I feel *llama* is an even funnier word.
- 11 Dad knows a lot of funny words, but during pancake making he is always partial to *spatula*. . . .
- 12 I wooden-spoon-mix together all the ingredients, from the Ike Sense-spelled flour to the somewhat funny-named yogurt, while Ike quick-drops pats of butter onto the hot griddle. Mom super-supervises this part, letting out an *aaahh* sound of approval each time Ike places a pat correctly and an *ooo-ooo-ooo* sound of disapproval each time his hand comes down too close to the stove.
- 13 Dad big-spoons batter onto the burning black metal. It flattens and soon little bubbles begin bursting. After we count out five of these tiny explosions, Dad does the famous fancy McCarther flip. He skillfully slides his “spaaatuulaaa” under one round and snaps his wrist, revealing both the colorful tattoo on his wide forearm and the brown cooked side of the perfect pancake.
- 14 A most definite Dad cooking rule is: “Neither a borrower nor a lender be.” This means that when it comes to a particular pancaking post, whether it is buttering, mixing, or flipping, you have your very own job to do, and you should never ever trade or even ask to trade—you just do your job. Our cooking tasks have become total no-brainers and given the excellent eating results, I have to say that Dad’s pancaking rules most definitely do work.
- 15 The short stacks are piled high on each of our plates, the maple syrup slow-flowed, and the only sounds heard are the rushed clicks and clacks of forks on plates and the rumble of satisfied *umms*. . . .
- 16 This is an absolute authentic account of how every Saturday we, the Swishback McCarthers, would cook the tastiest pancakes in the whole world.

39

In “Excerpt from *100 Days and 99 Nights*,” what effect does the children saying “Sir, yes, sir!” in paragraph 6 have on the story’s tone? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

GO ON

40

In “Excerpt from *100 Days and 99 Nights*,” how do paragraph 2 and paragraph 14 contribute to the structure of the story? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

Directions
Read this poem. Then answer questions 41 through 43.

Rain Check

by Catherine Alene

Dad had to work
Straight through the day and into the night
Ringy cows¹ wouldn't load
Raced across the mesa² with their heads in the air

- 5 I'd finally decided what I was going to make
Pizza
His favorite
Heavy with meat and American cheese
His side
- 10 Veggies
No cheese
On mine

- But it's okay
He didn't make it home
- 15 I hadn't even started cooking when he called
I'd been standing in the kitchen
Staring into the refrigerator
Ignoring the sun melting red and gold behind the barn
Listening to Blue crunching his kibbles³
- 20 Tags chinging off the edge of his metal food dish
When the phone had rung

GO ON

“I’m so sorry. I’ll have to take a rain check. Go ahead and eat
without me,” he’d said.

I understand, Dad.

25 *We’ll do it again.*

Next week.

It’s okay

Really

It

30 Is

¹**ringy cows:** the cows’ bells ring as they run away from Dad

²**mesa:** a flat-topped, elevated area

³**kibbles:** pet food

41

How do lines 22 through 30 contribute to the plot of “Rain Check”? Use **two** details from the poem to support your response.

GO ON

42

How does the speaker’s point of view impact the tone of “Rain Check”? Use **two** details from the poem to support your response.

Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 43 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 17 and 18.



GO ON

43

The narrator of the story “Excerpt from *100 Days and 99 Nights*” and the speaker in the poem “Rain Check” have different points of view about their family situations. What is the narrator’s point of view about her family situation in “Excerpt from *100 Days and 99 Nights*”? What is the speaker’s point of view about her family situation in “Rain Check”? How are these points of view different? Use details from **both** the story and the poem to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe the narrator’s point of view about her family situation in “Excerpt from *100 Days and 99 Nights*”
- describe the speaker’s point of view about her family situation in “Rain Check”
- explain how these points of view are different
- use details from **both** the story and the poem to support your response

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.